

Milton Town Council Meeting June 8, 2015

Preliminary Minutes

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order in the Milton Public Library at 6:33 PM on June 8, 2015 by Mayor Jones. A moment of silence was then observed, followed by the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

Roll Call:

Theodore Kanakos, present
Emory West, present
Esthelda Parker-Selby, present
Michael Cote, present
Sam Garde, present
Edward Kost, present
Marion Jones, present
Seth Thompson, the Town Solicitor was also present

These Preliminary Minutes:

These preliminary minutes cover only the high points of the meeting. The discussions were recorded, and will be transcribed. The transcription will serve as the final minutes of the meeting. Documents included in the Council Package are not included as attachments to these preliminary minutes.

Public Participation

Cliff Newlands, 110 Oysterman Drive.

- Spoke in opposition to the changes recommended by the Charter & Ordinance Committee (C&OC)
- Questioned whether the Position Description for "Town Administrator" is the same as that for "Town Manager".
- Urged the Mayor & Council to listen to the people in regard to the recommended changes.

Jim Welu

- Spoke in opposition to the changes recommended by the C&OC.
- Questioned why the change in title from Town Manager to Town Administrator.
- Opined that the Town should have a position description for Town Administrator.
- Opined that the Town Charter chapter on Town Manager should include the requirement for a "vision."

Ellen Passman, Federal Street

- Spoke in opposition to the changes recommended by the C&OC.
- Milton needs a Town Manager, skilled in municipal finance and administration.
- Milton needs someone at the helm with a vision of where the Town could be.

- Opposed to “dumbing down” the position.
- Opined that “Administrator” is a “fuzzy” word, “Manager” is a better understood term.
- Opined that Milton needs two identifiable positions: (1) Town Manager, and (2) Town Clerk.

Barbara Wagner

- Spoke in opposition to the changes recommended by the C&OC.
- Opined that Town Manager is a recognized title, and an important position for Milton.
- Opined that a Town Manager establishes standards, motivates and monitors performance of entire own staff.
- Milton is not currently reaping the benefits of having a Town Manager.
- Opined that Milton needs a Town Manager.

Don Post, 311 Behringer Ave.

- Spoke in opposition to the changes recommended by the C&OC.
- The Town Charter requires a Town Manager.
- Three past mayors wanted and had (for at least some time), Town Managers.
- Opined that there was no good reason for changing the title in the Charter.
- Noted that the new website does not have an Administrative Department listed.

Janet Turner, Union Street.

- Spoke in opposition to the changes recommended by the C&OC.
- She was a member of the past Charter Committee, and opined that the position of Town Manager was cast in the current Charter in compliance with the consensus of that Committee.
- Opined that a Town Manager needs foresight to help a town make correct decisions.
- Opined that Milton has wasted a lot of potential sources of funds by not having a Town Manager.
 - Town Treasurer responded with the following facts:
 - Milton overspent revenues by \$1.2 million in FY 2007, by \$662 thousand in FY 2008; by 583 thousand in FY 2009; and by \$500 thousand in FY 2010. The Town’s finances were being managed by a Town Manager for some or most of those years.
- Indicated that words have meanings and meanings have consequences.
- Opined that Milton needs to hire a Town Manager.

Betty McGrath, West Shore Drive

- Spoke neither in support nor in opposition to the proposed changes.
- Opined that there was the appearance of too much animosity on both sides.
- Opined that changing a title without changing the duties was perhaps making more of an issue than it deserved.
- Opined that neither the existing Charter nor the proposed change attributed a responsibility for a forward “vision”.
- Opined that “vision” should be included because it is important.

Don Shandler, Grist Mill Drive.

- Spoke in opposition to the changes recommended by the C&OC.
- Said he trusts Emory West, because Emory has stated that the Mayor & Council need to listen to the people.
- Opined that the recent letters to the Editor of the Cape Gazette were well written and articulated excellent reasons for rejecting the proposed change.
- Opined that the number of people in the room was evidence of dissatisfaction with the proposed change.
- Opined that the residents are angered and frustrated over an apparent reluctance to listen to their feelings on the proposed changes.
- Opined that Milton needs someone with vision to help lead the Town to where the residents want it to go.
- Opined that education and experience are important in the selection of a Town Manager.

Mary Schwanky, Sun Dance Lane

- Specifically asked Councilman Garde why the suggestion was put forward to change the title from Town Manager to Town Administrator.
- Opined that Milton needs a leader with a forward looking vision.

Rich Miller, Grist Mill Drive

- Was a member of the Committee that recommended the changes.
- Indicated that the change was recommended principally to remove confusion from the rest of the document where the Town Manager and Town Clerk were assigned responsibilities that were in potential conflict.
- There was nothing nefarious about the recommendation.

Don Mazzeo

- Was a member of the Committee that recommended the changes.
- Indicated that the change was recommended to conform the language throughout the document and to provide consistency in the responsibilities.

Judy Shandler, Grist Mill Drive.

- Spoke in opposition to the changes recommended by the C&OC.
- Opined that it was wonderful to see so many people turn out to make their positions known.
- Indicated that Milton had not moved forward in the process of hiring a new Town Manager since Win Abbott did not renew his contract, approximately 20 months ago.
- Indicated she was shocked to see that Kristy Rogers was listed in the 2015 - 2017 Sussex County Constituent Service Guide as the Town Administrator for Milton; and that this fact might represent some "back door" agenda to perpetuate the recommended changes.
- Opined that a good Town Manager will save the town money by virtue of searching for outside sources of funding and managing efficiently.

Ginny Weeks, Clifton Street.

- Spoke in opposition to the changes recommended by the C&OC.

- Thanked the Mayor for speaking out at the County Council meeting in opposition to Overbrook Town Center.
- Questioned why no budget was established to hire a Town Manager, as required by the existing Charter.
- Opined that Milton was currently illegally in violation of the Charter by not having initiated the hiring process.
- Asked when will we advertise for a Town Manager.

Ed Kost, Cannery Village.

- Indicated that he had spoken with the Town Managers of 4 of the surrounding towns.
- Indicated that one had a Civil Engineering degree, one a degree in Accounting, and one with a degree in Economics and Personnel Management.
- All of them indicate to Ed that the job was primarily responsible for financial and personnel matters.
- None thought there was a significant difference in whether they were called Town Manager or Town Administrator.
- Milton needs a fully staffed Police Dep't, with sufficient monetary incentives to stay; and that that will cause an increase in expenditures.
- Opined that Milton needs to decide how much money we are willing to spend to upgrade the Police incentives, and hire a new Town Manager.

Michela Coffaro, Union Street.

- Spoke in opposition to the changes recommended by the C&OC.
- Asked for an explanation of the difference between Town Manager & Town Administrator.

Ken Kaye, 100 Arch Street.

- Spoke in opposition to the changes recommended by the C&OC.
- A "Manager" can "come back" at and to Mayor & Council in the event he/she thinks a policy established by Mayor & Council needs to be improved.

Primo Tocafondi, 103 Isle Lane.

- Indicated he never had a doubt as to the well-meaning of the members of the C&OC.
- Opined that Mayor & Council needs a "go to" person on staff to advise and recommend policies that are in conformance with all the effective regulations, and still have a good chance for success.
- Opined that a Town Manager would have no duties other than to live & breathe the Town's interests.
- A Town Manager needs qualifications including education and experience.

Additions or Corrections to the Agenda

There were no additions or corrections to the Agenda brought forward.

Agenda Approval

A motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved to approve the Agenda as presented.

Discussion and Possible Vote on the Following:

a. Town Charter Section 18 "Town Manager" and Section 19 "Town Clerk"

- Councilman Kost made a motion to accept Chapter 18 as recommended by the Charter & Ordinance Committee.
- Councilman Garde seconded for discussion only, indicating that he would vote against the motion based on the visceral emotions and input from the citizens.
- Councilwoman Parker-Selby indicated she was in favor of maintaining the title Town Manager, and suggested reviewing the job descriptions on file in Town Hall.
- Councilman West indicated he could not in favor the terminology Town Administrator. He indicated his preference for a Town Manager.
- Councilman Kanakos indicated he hasn't found one person who agrees to the change in title recommend by the C&OC.
- A roll-call vote was taken on the motion to use the language recommended by the C&O Committee, i.e., change the existing charter terminology in Chapter 18 from Town Manager to Town Administrator (with a second):
 - Councilman Kanakos: No
 - Councilman West: No
 - Councilwoman Parker-Selby: No
 - Councilman Cote: No
 - Councilman Garde: No
 - Councilman Kost: No
 - Mayor Jones: No
- Councilman Garde made a motion to leave the language in Chapter 18 as currently written, i.e., using the term "Town Manager". Councilman West seconded. A vote was taken and the motion was unanimously approved.
- Councilman Garde made a motion to leave the language in Chapter 19 as currently written, i.e., using the term "TownClerk". The motion was seconded. A vote was taken and the motion was unanimously approved.

Adjournment

A motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved to adjourn.

Approval

These minutes were approved at the Town Council meeting held on June 22, 2015.

Very Respectfully submitted,
James C. ("Sam") Garde,
Secretary of the Town Council

